

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 000375
ORIGIN INR-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SSM-03 /021 R

DRAFTED BY INR/RNA/NE:AAVACCARO
APPROVED BY INR/RNA:PHSTODDARD
SSM-CWKONTOS
DESIRED DISTRIBUTION
SSM

-----040153Z 060883 /73

R 032216Z JAN 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USMISSION SINAI

S E C R E T STATE 000375

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: EG, IS, PINR

SUBJECT: INTSUM 224 - JANUARY 3, 1977

1. LEBANON. AFTER A LENGTHY CABINET MEETING UNDER
PRESIDENT SARKIS ON JANUARY 1, THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT
FOR THE FIRST TIME USED ITS EXTRAORDINARY POWERS WHICH
WERE GRANTED BY PARLIAMENT LAST MONTH. THE MAJOR DECREES
ISSUED:

--SUBJECTED THE PRESS AND MOVIE THEATERS TO GOVERNMENT
CENSORSHIP;

--REDUCED THE NUMBER OF RELIGIOUS AND NATIONAL HOLIDAYS
FROM 25 TO 14;

--RETIRED SEVERAL SENIOR CIVIL SERVANTS AND AMBASSADORS;
AND -

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 000375

--TOOK A NUMBER OF STEPS DESIGNED TO ESTABLISH CIVIL
ADMINISTRATION IN THE CITIES AND TO BEGIN THE RECONSTRUC-
TION OF LEBANON.

2. DISAGREEMENTS WITHIN THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT OVER THE
COURSE OF REDEVELOPMENT APPEAR TO BE GROWING. LEBANESE
FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTROS COMMENTED TO EMBASSY BEIRUT
OFFICIALS THAT HE WAS THE ONLY "POLITICAL MINISTER" IN THE

CABINET, WHICH IMPOSED A VERY HEAVY BURDEN ON HIM. HE SAID THAT A LOGICAL PROGRESSION IN THE REBUILDING OF THE STATE WOULD BE TO FIND A NEW POLITICAL FORMULA FIRST, THEN TO REBUILD THE COUNTRY ACCORDINGLY. IN FACT, ACCORDING TO BOUTROS, THE SARKIS GOVERNMENT HAD STARTED WITH RECONSTRUCTION, TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE ON A "NON-POLITICAL" BASIS, HOPING THEREBY TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR A NEW POLITICAL FORMULA SOME MONTHS HENCE.

3. BOUTROS ALSO SAID THE GOVERNMENT IS JUST AT THE BEGINNING OF RECONSTRUCTING THE ARMY. HE SAID THAT THE PRIORITIES WERE FIRST THE REESTABLISHMENT OF THE INTERNAL SECURITY FORCES AND THEN THE ARMY, SINCE LEBANON COULD RELY PROVISIONALLY ON THE SYRIAN ARMY AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR A LEBANESE ARMY.

4. OUR BEIRUT DEFENSE ATTACHE CONFIRMED THAT APPROXIMATELY 500 UAE TROOPS WERE ENCAMPED IN QABB ELIAS (SOUTH OF ZAHLEH), AND DEFENSIVE PREPARATIONS INDICATED THAT THEY EXPECTED A LENGTHY STAY. THE ASF CHIEF OF STAFF INFORMED OUR DEFENSE ATTACHE THAT THERE IS NO INTENT IN THE SHORT TERM TO DEPLOY THESE OR OTHER NON-SYRIAN ASF FORCES IN THE SOUTH.

5. OVER THE WEEKEND PHALANGE RADIO REPORTED THAT CHRISTIAN VILLAGES IN SOUTHERN LEBANON WERE SHELLED BY PALESTINIANS. AN ISRAELI SOURCE REPORTED THAT CHRISTIAN FORCES IN THAT AREA HAVE BEEN REENFORCED.

(SECRET)

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 000375

6. ISRAEL. MATITYAHU PELED, THE LEADER OF THE ISRAELI DOVE GROUP "THE COUNCIL FOR ISRAEL-PALESTINIAN PEACE," SAID JANUARY 1 THAT HE AND UNIDENTIFIED PLO LEADER HAD SIGNED A DOCUMENT IN PARIS WHICH RECOGNIZED ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST IN RETURN FOR AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD RELEASE THE TEXT OF THE PURPORTED DOCUMENT SOON, AND THE PLO WOULD DO LIKEWISE. PELED ALSO QUOTED THE PLO LEADER AS SAYING THE FEDAYEEN WOULD HALT ITS ANTI-ISRAEL TERRORIST ACTIONS IF THE PLO WAS INVITED TO THE GENEVA PEACE CONFERENCE. HOWEVER, PLO POLITICAL CHIEF QADDUMI DENIED THAT ANY PLO LEADER HAD SIGNED SUCH A DOCUMENT WITH PELED.

7. THE "PEACE SHIP" OF ISRAELI DOVE ABI NATHAN TRANSITED THE SUEZ CANAL YESTERDAY, AFTER BEING REFUSED PASSAGE BY THE EGYPTIANS TWICE PREVIOUSLY THIS YEAR. REUTER COMMENTED THAT THIS WAS SEEN AS ANOTHER INDICATION OF EGYPTIAN DETERMINATION TO REACH A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT.

8. IN A SERIES OF RECENT PUBLIC REMARKS, FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON HAS SOUNDED A STERN NOTE ON FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO THE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM. SPEAKING ON DECEMBER 27 ABOUT A NEW GENEVA CONFERENCE, ALLON SAID THAT NO REAL NEGOTIATIONS COULD TAKE PLACE AT GENEVA; HE ALSO DECLARED, HOWEVER, THAT ISRAEL'S WILLINGNESS TO RETURN TO GENEVA WAS "NOT A TACTIC; WE MEAN IT."

9. EMBASSY TEL AVIV REPORTED THAT A FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL HAD CLARIFIED THE APPARENT CONTRADICTION IN ALLON'S STATEMENTS ON THE GENEVA CONFERENCE BY SAYING THAT, IN THE ISRAELI VIEW, GENEVA COULD NOT BE THE FORUM FOR MEANINGFUL TALKS, BUT IT WOULD SERVE AS THE SYMBOLIC AND CEREMONIAL "UMBRELLA" UNDER WHICH DIRECT TALKS COULD TAKE PLACE. IN THE EMBASSY'S ASSESSMENT, THIS LINE APPEARS DESIGNED TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM OF RECONCILING ISRAEL'S
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 000375

INSISTENCE ON DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS, ON ONE HAND, WITH THE ARAB DESIRE FOR THE PRESENCE AT GENEVA OF A GREAT POWER PRESENCE.

10. TAKEN AS A WHOLE, ALLON'S RECENT STATEMENTS PROBABLY ARE THE OPENING ROUND IN THE PROCESS OF SETTING FORTH THE LABOR PARTY'S BASIC FOREIGN POLICY VIEWS IN PREPARATION FOR THE ELECTIONS. AS ENUNCIATED BY ALLON, ISRAELI POLICIES APPEAR DESIGNED TO EVINCE A TOUGH ATTITUDE FOR THE BENEFIT OF ISRAEL'S ELECTORATE, WHILE MAINTAINING FLEXIBILITY IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA AND AVOIDING FORECLOSING ANY OPTION IN THE PEACE PROCESS. (SECRET)

11. EGYPT. SADAT'S INTERVIEW WITH WASHINGTON POST CORRESPONDENT LIPPMAN ON DECEMBER 25 SEEMS TO INDICATE THAT HE HAS CHANGED HIS POSITION ON THE NATURE OF A FUTURE PALESTINIAN STATE. SADAT IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT ANY NEWLY CREATED PALESTINIAN STATE MUST BE LINKED TO JORDAN. IN THE PAST, HE HAS TAKEN A MORE CAUTIOUS APPROACH, NOTING THAT A PALESTINIAN STATE COULD BE LINKED TO JORDAN. HIS PREVIOUS POSITION WAS GENERALLY REGARDED AS A GESTURE DESIGNED TO ASSUAGE ISRAELI CONCERNS ABOUT AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE. HIS NEWLY STATED POSITION SEEMS TO GO FURTHER.

12. IF SADAT HAS BEEN QUOTED CORRECTLY, HIS NEW AND MORE ASSERTIVE POSITION SEEMS TO INDICATE THAT HE:

--IS WILLING TO PUT SUBSTANTIAL PRESSURE ON THE PLO,
FOR THEY GENERALLY OPPOSE ANY LINKAGE WITH JORDAN;

--PROBABLY REACHED AGREEMENT WITH ASAD, AT LEAST IN PRINCIPLE, ON A GREATER JORDANIAN ROLE THAN HAD BEEN ENVISAGED AT RABAT;

--IS WILLING TO IMPROVE BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH HUSAYN;
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 000375

--DOES NOT SEEM TO OPPOSE A CLOSER UNION BETWEEN SYRIA, JORDAN, AND A FUTURE PALESTINIAN STATE, A DEVELOPMENT THAT WOULD ENTAIL AN EXPANSION OF SYRIAN INFLUENCE.
(LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

13. PALESTINIAN. CAIRO RADIO REPORTED THAT PLO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER ABU MAZIN HAD OFFICIALLY ASKED SYRIA AND EGYPT TO ALLOW THE PLO TO JOIN THE "UNIFIED POLITICAL COMMAND" RECENTLY DECIDED UPON BY THE TWO COUNTRIES. ABU MAZIN ALSO REPORTEDLY OBSERVED THAT THE PLO WOULD "WELCOME JORDAN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE UNIFIED COMMAND."

14. PLO POLITICAL DEPARTMENT HEAD QADDUMI STATED IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE VOICE OF PALESTINE THAT THERE HAS BEEN TOO MUCH TALK ABOUT ESTABLISHING A GOVERNMENT-IN-EXILE. THE DECISION FOR ESTABLISHING SUCH A GOVERNMENT MUST BE TAKEN BY THE PNC AFTER CONSULTATIONS WITH THE SOCIALIST AND NON-ALIGNED STATES. MOREOVER, THE PLO PREFERS THAT SUCH A GOVERNMENT BE FORMED ON A PIECE OF LAND AND THE ACCEPTANCE OF A WEST BANK AND GAZA STATE WOULD NOT BE A RENUNCIATION OF THE BASIC OBJECTIVE OF CREATING A GREATER PALESTINIAN STATE, INCLUDING JEWS, CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS. (UNCLASSIFIED)

15. OIL. IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE LONDON GUARDIAN, SAUDI PETROLEUM MINISTER YAMANI STATED THAT THE SAUDI DECISION TO LIMIT ITS OIL PRICE HIKE HAD BEEN LARGELY TAKEN OUT OF FEAR THAT ANY ADDITIONAL ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES IN EUROPE COULD LEAD TO FURTHER COMMUNIST INROADS THERE. HOWEVER, IN A DER SPIEGEL INTERVIEW, YAMANI AGAIN LINKED THE SAUDI DECISION TO CONCESSIONS BY WESTERN NATIONS ON THE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM AND THE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE, SAYING IF CONCESSIONS WERE NOT MADE, THE SAUDIS WOULD "NO LONGER BE ABLE TO HELP YOU." (UNCLASSIFIED)

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 06 STATE 000375

16. SYRIA. COMMENTING ON PRESS REPORTS THAT SYRIA HAS LIFTED ITS RESTRICTIONS ON SYRIAN JEWS, EMBASSY DAMASCUS REPORTED THAT SEVERAL OF THE NEW "RIGHTS" LISTED (PROPERTY OWNERSHIP, GOVERNMENT SERVICE) IN THESE REPORTS HAVE BEEN IN EFFECT FOR THE PAST FEW YEARS, ALBEIT WITH SOME LIMITATIONS. TRAVEL BY SYRIAN JEWS HAS ALSO BEEN PERMITTED FOR BRIEF PERIODS IF A BOND IS POSTED AS PROOF OF AN INTENT TO RETURN. AMBASSADOR MURPHY OBSERVED THAT THIS IS NO GUARANTEE THAT IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW, LESS STRINGENT REGULATIONS WILL LEAD TO A RELAXATION ON THE KEY EMIGRATION ISSUE. AN AP SOURCE STATED, HOWEVER, THAT INTERIOR MINISTER DABBAGH HAD GIVEN HIM THE IMPRESSION THAT EMIGRATION WOULD BE INDIRECTLY PERMITTED. (SECRET) KISSINGER

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 03-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE000375
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: AAVACCARO
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X2
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770002-0734
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770184/aaaacvqh.tel
Line Count: 238
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d8d7e4dd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN INR
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3671501
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INTSUM 224 - JANUARY 3, 1977
TAGS: PINR, EG, IS, LE
To: SINAI
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d8d7e4dd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009